539 In the evening, Omogon again said to Elliei: "Go to sleep in the storehouse." But Elliei answered, "I shall sleep there," pointing to the place where the ugly girl slept. The old man was angry, but replied, "Well, go where you wish." In the morning, Omogon drove Elliei and his ugly daughter from his house, giving them one horn-less cow and one tail-less mare. Thus they left.

They settled not far from Omogon and set up a conical birchbark tent and sewed many birchbark vessels. They kept their pit fire smoking constantly, thus attracting Omogon's cattle. Elliei and his wife regularly milked Omogon's cattle and hoarded a great store of kumiss, butter, cream, and milk. Thus, Elliei, after accumulating many milk products arranged a milk festival called *Ysyakh* and invited his father-in-law. Omogon was angry and said, "How can you arrange a festival with the milk from only one tail-less mare; you are deriding me." He brandished his short dagger, and compelled Elliei to leave. All the sons and daughters of Omogon, except one, the shaman of benevolent spirits, came to the feast. The old woman wished to go, but Omogon would not permit her.

Elliei spread fresh grass and seated his guests in a circle. Then he lifted his goblet of kumiss to the head of the main beam, then to the east, and finally in the direction of the hearth, and poured its contents into the fire. Following this he became much excited and began a shamanistic performance. His speech (which was spoken through him by the spirit of the fire) was as follows:—

"Now, well, when as a child of another tribe I came hither and arranged a festival, to which Omogon did not come, being much too rich and satiated, I will lower his height and shorten his length." Hearing this, Omogon's two sons were enraged, and running to their father, told him what happened. Then Omogon, seizing his short dagger, hastened to his son-in-law with his sons, growling like a bear. Reaching Elliei's camp, he cut the birchbark door of the tent with his dagger, but at this moment his arms and legs became distorted. Seeing this, Omogon's sons took him in their arms and carried him home. The assembled guests departed, leaving the kumiss unfinished. Omogon became ill and soon died.

After their father's death, his sons, fearing that they too would die, left their old settlement, dispersed in different directions, and each settled where he pleased. Thus Elliei remained alone in the plains of Saisary, where the city of Yakutsk is now situated.

● 173 *Historical Significance of Origin Traditions.* To clarify the historical significance of the foregoing Yakut origin traditions,[1] it will be

[1] [CF. pp. 45-58, CATEGORY 116 — ANALYST]

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

interesting to present (in translation) the interpretations of the late Professor W. Radloff and the student of the Yakut, Edward Pekarsky. Radloff[1] states:— 173

All these tales demonstrate that dim recollections of the earliest prehistoric times have been preserved in the Yakut traditions. They prove that the bulk of the people emigrated from the south and that the immigrants consisted of two elements, which are, naturally, impersonated in two epic heroes, Omogoi (Onogoi, Omogon, Ogonom) and Elliei (Ellei). In the first tale, Omogoi is directly represented as a Buryat (i.e., a Mongol) while Elliei appears in most of the tales as an alien newcomer, who occasionally confronts Omogoi and enters into his service. Many tales also mention his tall stature, handsomeness, and his white complexion, which rouse the love of Omogoi's daughters. This may be interpreted in favor of his belonging to the Turkic race. He also emerged as the stronger and more intelligent of the two heroes, who may enter into compact with deities, who in former times was in possession of written records which he had, however, lost on his northward journey. Omogoi unconsciously feels Elliei's mental power and trembles when the latter enters the house, although he looks down at him as at a stranger and does not want to admit at first that he may accept him as a son-in-law. However, Omogoi is defeated in the family conflict caused later by the choice of Elliei. Elliei's wealth and influence grew and he became the spiritual leader of the people, the founder of their religion, and he is regarded by his numerous posterity as the ancestor of the present Yakut people.

The circumstances, demonstrating to Omogoi his unconscious recognition of Elliei's innate power, are altered in different traditions and may be inferred from the comparison of many tales. In one a white horse skin is fastened by pegs, in another Omogoi's coat, without his knowledge, is secured to the ground by pegs so that Omogoi spills the kumiss when attempting to rise. I believe, therefore, that in the beginning the tradition ran as follows: Omogoi's wife asserts that he unconsciously fears Elliei and tremblingly rises when he enters. She wants him to prove her assertion and tells him to sit down on a white horse hide with a goblet filled with kumiss. Then, without his knowledge, she fastens his coat to the floor with pegs, and when Elliei enters, Omogoi, afraid of his power, rises. Since his coat is secured to the horse hide, he spills the kumiss, trembling with excitement. This proof of his innate and unconscious terror of Elliei compels him to become more closely allied with him.

A very similar passage is found in the Turkish cycle of Toktamysh-Khan, which was related to me in various places, for instance, among the Kurdak on the Irtysh. When Idāgā enters the house (of Toktamysh-Khan), the prince rises each time to answer his greeting. He himself did not realize it, but his wife said, "You rise when Idāgā enters." But the prince answered, "I do not rise." After that she sewed the skirts of his coat to the pillow on which he sat. Thus he knew that he got up. Toktamysh-Khan said to his courtiers, "When Idāgā enters, I rise and I do not know why I do this." His prophets said, "Later on this child will kill you."

An identical story is told of Toktamysh and Idāgā-Pi by the Baraba-Tatars. With further details this tale was narrated to me in the Crimean village called Büyük Khodshalar.

I do not believe that the agreement of the Yakut and Turkish traditions will prove that the Turkic tribe, which turkicized the Uriankhai was still in close contact

[1] Radloff, *ibid.*, 81–83.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

173 with its Turkish neighbors in the time of Toktamysh-Khan. We may be dealing here with an older Turkish tale of the foundling or stranger, Idägä (Ellisi), which was later inserted in the Toktamysh cycle. At any rate, we must admit that this tradition was transplanted on the banks of the Lena by Turkish immigrants and that Ellisi should be regarded as a representative of Turkdom.

Finally, I wish to refer to still another incident in the Yakut traditions, which has been widely distributed among the Turkic tribes of Siberia. I refer to the passage in which the Yakut hero, Tygyn, presents the first Russians as much land for their use as could be contained in an onkin. The Russians outwitted him, cutting the hide into strips narrow enough to extend round a piece of land sufficient to build a fortress on it in the future. We find the same tradition among the Tobol-Tatars and Baraba-Tatars, according to which Kutsum-Khan makes a similar promise to the Russian conqueror of Siberia, Yermak, and is outwitted by the latter.

As the same trick was used in the foundation of Carthage, we are concerned here with a tradition which was very early transmitted to the Turks from the south.

When an incident like this trick is found in the traditions of two different peoples who had no previous intercourse, and one of whom were the Russian conquerors, it may be explained, I believe, by the fact that since the Russians built fortresses and cities in the midst of nomadic cattle breeders, or wandering hunters, the tradition of city-building may refer to the Russians alone, especially since the former connections of the Yakut with China and Central Asia were already long forgotten.

Now, let us turn to Pekarsky,[1] who says:—

The question of the origin of the Yakut is one of the most obscure in their history. We have at our disposal no authentic historical data to throw decisive light on this question. Therefore, the investigator must draw to his aid the results of linguistic, archaeological, anthropological, and ethnographical investigations, to obtain some indications as to the origin of this gifted people who have preserved, despite very unfavorable conditions of life, their comprehensive language and the products of their creative genius, and, what is more remarkable, their physical type. Not only did the Yakut assimilate with surrounding tribes, but they are themselves assimilating their neighbors more or less, frequently to such an extent as to eliminate their native language entirely.

Investigators of the Yakut long ago began to find interest in their former fate. This is shown by the collection and publication of Yakut origin traditions. In the absence of chronicles these traditions may give certain historical data.

Prehistory

172 In prehistoric times, beginning with the northern retreat of the glaciers, many southern peoples who had to adjust themselves to the severe conditions of life in the northern forests or the polar tundra, occupied Siberia. Some of the newcomers, like the Tungus, lost many of their former culture traits, and became reindeer breeders or hunters, while others, like the Yakut, were able in the far north to retain their cattle-breeding culture of the Central Asiatic steppes. But this north-

[1] Pekarsky, *ibid.*

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

mining, smelting, forging, and smithing required a sedentary life. While some families of a clan, or even some members of a family, were engaged in the iron industry, their relatives nomadized with their herds. Caves may have served as temporary shelters during the winter when the wet walls became frozen and a fire was used as protection from the cold. 172

Objects of Yakut culture were traced by Petri and other Siberian archaeologists in excavations not only in Cis-Baikalia, but also in the valleys of the Birusa, Angara, Murina, Kuda, Selenga, Kichega, and Tunka rivers; on the upper course of the Lena, and in the Orkhon country. Thus, the Yakut must have been the horse and cattle breeding tribe which formerly lived around Lake Baikal and in the region of the upper course of the Lena. Having been separated from the common Turkic stem, they were gradually forced to the north, through Cis-Baikalia, the northern districts of Irkutsk Province, and then along the valley of the Lena to their present abode. Archaeological research along this route and in Yakut Province may give a firmer foundation for the above conjectures as to Yakut prehistory. Unfortunately, nothing has been accomplished in this field of investigation in the past.

But where are we to search for the original home of the Yakut? We have previously noted that one tradition connects the Yakut with the Kirghiz[1] Radloff connects the Yakut with the Soyot or Uriankhai of the Sayan region. Samoilovich, the student of the Turkic languages, classifies the Yakut and Uigur in one group.

In connection with an iron tobacco pipe of Chinese form, found in his Cis-Baikalian excavations, Petri states that the Yakut also manufacture such pipes at present and refers to Sieroszevski[1] who remarks that the pipe pattern was adopted from the Chinese by the ancestors of the Yakut in remote times when they lived somewhere in central Asia and had an active intercourse with China.

Historical Migrations

In the thirteenth century, the Yakut were already in the region of Lake Baikal, having been isolated from other Turkic tribes by the Mongol invasion of that century. The Mongolian Buryat, who came from the banks of the Upper Amur, forced the Yakut, with their horses and cattle, to move down the Lena River. On their way to their present habitat, they fought the war-like Tungus, who finally retreated to the mountainous portions of Yakut Province and the Yakut occupied the Lena River Valley to its mouth, and all its tributaries. After the occu- 173 167

[1] Ibid, 345, Fig. 61.

1 A [Cf. p. 54, category 539 -- ANALYST]

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902)1933 RV2Yakut RV2
HISTORILALSIBERIA RR2

HISTORY OF CONTACT WITH RUSSIANS

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●173 The Yakut once lived in southern Cis-Baikalia and earlier, possibly, in the Sayan Mountains. Under pressure from the Mongol-Buryat, they wandered into the Lena Valley occupied by Tungus tribes, whom they forced to retreat from the valley into the mountains. These events which occurred in the thirteenth or fourteenth century of our era, naturally could not be recorded in the old Russian annals. Our information is based on oral traditions, preserved among the Yakut.

HS
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175 We have previously noted (see p. 64) that the Yakut were subjugated by two different Cossack parties from Mangasey aand Yeniseisk. The Olekminsk fortress on the Lena River was erected in 1630 when only Tungus lived in the region. In 1637 a Cossack party, under the command of Busa, collected tribute in furs from the Yakut of the Yana River.

In 1638 the Cossack elder, Postnik Ivanov, with a party of twenty-seven men, left Yakutsk on horseback, crossed the Verkhoyansk Ridge and entered the valley of the upper course of the Yana River, meeting first Tungus, and later Yakut.

In 1641 a Cossack party, under the command of Stadukhin, journeyed to the northeast of Yakutsk and reached the tableland, Oimekon, on the upper course of the Indighirka River. There they met Reindeer Tungus and cattle-breeding Yakut and exacted fur tribute from them.

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167 In 1675 there were in Olekminsk 206 tribute-paying Yakut and Tungus; forty years previously there were no Yakut in Olekminsk. On the Viliui River were three camps of Tungus and Yakut, totaling 1005 men; in Shiganak were 332 Yakut and Tungus; in Verkhoyansk 125 Yakut tax payers.

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175 By 1620 a report had reached Tobolsk from the Mangaseya Cossacks of the Great (Lena) River and the Lena Yakut. In 1631 they descended by the Viliui River, a tributary of the Lena, to the Lena River and imposed tribute on the adjacent Yakut. In 1632 a party of Cossacks under the command of the Boyar's son, Shakhov, took tribute in sables from a clan of Viliui horse-breeding Yakut. The Viliui River farther up from its mouth was occupied by Tungus only. The northern boundary of the distribution of the Yakut at that time was the mouth of the Viliui. The whole Lena Valley from the mouth of the Viliui River to the south, at a distance of about 500 kilometers (or 310 miles) was occupied by Yakut. In their possession were also all the Lena islands of that region, rich in

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6: Sauer--109 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 101, 171, 173

"The nation known among the Russians by the name of Yakuti call themselves Socha, and say that they came originally from the south. A nation of Mongals inhabit the district of Krasnoyarsk, extending to China, who also call themselves Socha, and speak the same language as the Yakuti. These relate the following story of their migration."

6: Sauer--109-110 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut-1-2
116, 171, 173

"The Toyon (i.e. Chief) Omogai Bey, with all his tribe and cattle, left the fertile plains situated to the west of the lake Baical, or Baighal, to make way for a more powerful horde; retreating to the grassy meadows between Irkutsk and the river Lena, now known by the name of the Buratski Step. Here he resided some years, probably at continual strife with the Burati; for he was compelled to fly from their fury, availing himself of the decreasing moon, at which time the Burati never attack their enemies. Omogai crossed the Lena, at a spot between where Katshuga and Vercholensk now stands. He kept close to the river, making resting-places where he found pasture for his cattle, until he arrived at the estuary of the Olekma. In this neighbourhood are meadows affording plenty of grass, the rivers are abundantly stored with fish, and the woods replete with wild beasts. He might, indeed, have found places equally eligible before he came so far to the north; but these were the resort of the Tungoose, and he would have exposed himself to their depreda-[110]tions; for the Asiatic tribes, as well as those of America, were inveterate enemies to each other, and skirmishes were the sure consequences of meeting in their hunting parties: even now these frequently happen. While Omogai was in this situation, two of his hunters fell in with a man of their own race, who was called Aley, or Eley, and had made his escape from the Burati. They took him to Omogai's who employed him as his labourer. His remarkable strength, skill, and activity, soon recommended him to Omogai's particular notice, and

he was entrusted with the management of some excursions. The astonishing success that attended all his enterprises, induced Omogai to make him overseer of all his tribe and effects, which latter were considerably increased by the prudence of Aley's management; and, in consequence of this increase, the chief was obliged to extend his possessions to the vicinity of the present town of Yakutsk and the opposite plains."

6: Sauer--110-111 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut-1-2
116, 173, 619

"Omogai, [RCH: the old chief who had led his Yakut-speaking tribe from Lake Baikal to Olekma] who had a daughter by his wife then living, and a young woman whom he had adopted, was old, jealous, and dreaded the effects of Aley's [RCH: the young successor to the chief] power. He observed, that all his tribe esteemed Aley to adoration; for they supposed him to possess supernatural powers, and attributed his continual good fortune and success to the immediate influence of spirits. This made him uneasy; and, with a view of securing his possessions and his name, he offered Aley his daughter in marriage. Aley now avowed himself a Shaman, and assumed the powers of divination. He told Omogai, that his daughter would never have children, and therefore he would not take her; but demanded the young woman that the chief had adopted, with whom he should have a numerous family. The mother violently opposed this union, but Omogai at length consented. Aley's life was soon rendered very unpleasant by the persecution of the mother and [111] daughter; but, having received very liberal presents from Omogai at the time of obtaining the eldership of the tribe, and as rewards for his careful management not only of cattle and horses, but also of men and women labourers, he was in possession of independent wealth; and therefore retired, with Omogai's consent, two days' journey from his habitation, and established himself on the plains 18 versts north-west of the present town of Yakutsk, by the side of a branch of the river Lena, now dry. Here he remained till the death of his benefactor, when the greatest part of the tribe

came over to him. Aley, who was now become extremely powerful, is reported to have had 12 sons and several daughters (Ghanghalas, or Chanhallas), the eldest of whom was the founder of the Ghanghalaski tribe. The remaining history of Omogai's wife and daughter I have not been able to learn; but the tribe is now known by the name of Batulinsk. It is said to be about 300 years since Omogai migrated hither.

The Batulinski tribe was afterwards increased by a number of the Chorintski Burats; but the time of their union is unknown. I am inclined to think that their language was different; for if a Yakut be not immediately understood by his brethren, he expresses his dislike to repeat the sentence, by saying, 'I spoke not with the tongue of a Chorintski.'"

6: Sauer--133-135 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut-1-4
116, 173

"Returning homeward, I arrived late at a hut about 18 versts from town, and resolved on passing the night in it. The landlord, an old Sochalar, [RCH: Yakut name for a Yakut] entertained me with an account of his own pedigree; tracing himself, in a direct line, from Aley; [RCH: see category 116, pp. 109-111] and assured me that this was the neighbourhood to which he retreated from Omogai; of which retreat he gave me the following account:

Aley received numberless presents from Omogai and his dependents during his elder-ship; but was obliged to leave all these behind him, and was driven from Omogai with only two old mares, on which he and his wife rode; all his possessions at the time were, the clothes on their backs, a bow and arrows, a hatchet, palma, and two knives, with fire materials. Aley thought this a convenient spot; and, halting the second day, built a temporary hut, collected carefully the dung of his mares, and, when the wind blew towards Omogai's habitations, made fires of the dung, the smell of which allured the strayed cattle to his dwelling: he then carefully fed and watered them, and drove them back.

Aley now built himself a very large hut and storehouses. Before his hut he stuck up posts, with carved tops, for travellers to tie their horses to, and made a number of hurdle coops and pens close to his dwelling. The cattle constantly returning, with fresh numbers of milch cows and mares, Aley collected immense quantities of butter,

milk, and koumis; and, having been very successful in the chase, he had a great supply of the meat of the elk and deer, with game of all kinds. He now purposely wandered to [134] the places that he knew to be frequented by Omogai's tribe, fell in with some of his hunters, and brought them to his dwelling, having previously cautioned his wife to keep the strayed cattle far from his habitation. Omogai's people were astonished at the elegance of the habitation, and the profusion of fish and flesh of different animals; but, above all, at the quantities of koumis and butter with which he treated them, knowing that he had no cattle.

Aley told them, that he had been admonished by his spirits, or demons, to form the different pens which they saw before and round his hut, and to affix the posts for the horses of his visitors; assuring him, that his guests should be numerous, and his possessions great. He punctually obeyed the injunction of his demons; and, to his astonishment, observed a white-mouthed stallion lead to his pens a number of mares and cows: these his wife milked; which being effected, they vanished from his sight, but returned every night and morning. He kept his guests all night; and in the morning sent them away, with provisions for the road, and presents of rich furs for Omogai, his wife, and daughter.

Aley had now several children, and was very desirous of obtaining, by fair means if possible, the property that he ought to have received from Omogai. Not doubting that

the reports of the hunters, and the presents sent, would effect a reconciliation between them, and astonish his whole tribe, Aley resolved on paying his old master a visit, with additional presents, and inviting him, with the heads of his tribe and families, to pass a day or two at his habitation. He was well received, and Omogai promised to attend, with his wife, daughter, and friends, at an ap-[135]pointed time. Aley, on his return, built a very large temporary hut to receive his guests. They came and brought with them a considerable present of cattle. Aley treated them with great splendor for three days, received the present as such, and claimed with humility the cattle and labourers that had been unjustly kept from him, and which were his due, because he had served for them. Omogai acknowledged the demand to be just; but by the opposition of his wife and daughter was prevented from granting it. They departed with their friends; but Aley, through the influence of his demons, caused a violent storm and extreme darkness, in which they strayed several days; at length Omogai, his wife, and daughter, reached home; but the greater part of his friends returned to Aley, and acknowledged him their chief; being much disgusted at the refusal that he had received, and perhaps dreading the influence of his supernatural powers.

Omogai died shortly after, and the greatest part of his tribe went over with their cattle to Aley; but Batulin, one of his stewards, married the daughter, and secured the rest. She never bore him children, however; but Batulin took other wives, and

had several.

Aley had twelve sons and several daughters. Changhalas he initiated in his magic art, and he was the founder of the Changalaski tribe.

This account is general among the Changalaski, who adore the stallion; but the history, as I have before related it, [RCH: see catagory 116, pp. 109-111] is credited by the greater number."

7: Shklovsky -- 205-207 T-3 (1891-92)1916 Yakut-1-2
116, 173

"A very interesting legend is told by the Yakuts of the conquest of their region. The legend (with slight variation) is to be found among Russians as well as Yakuts.

The central figure in the legend is the warrior, Dygyn, a petty chief of the Yakuts. Here is the legend as it was told to me by an old Cossack:

'After Ermak had conquered Siberia, and was drowned in the River Irtish, his lieutenant, Ivan Koltzo, said: "Now that he is dead, why should I care for my life? I will go and fight." Then the Cossacks went in boats along the rivers, and when they reached the end of one river they carried the boats on their shoulders to another one, and they built stockaded settlements between the two rivers. [206] They conquered many of the natives, but themselves suffered much. Sometimes they were compelled by hunger to eat their own people. At last they came to the Yakutian land. A great number of natives came to meet them, and said: "Say, friends, what is the news?" "I want to trade with you," said Koltzo. 'Will you sell me as much land as a bullock's hide will enclose?' It was done. The Yakuts were stupid savages then, and they are stupid savages now. But Koltzo deceived them. He cut the bull's hide into thin strips and with them enclosed a large piece of land, built a tower on it, and said:

"Now I am going to fight you." And they fought. The Yakuts had their great warrior chief Dygyn. They say his shoulders were three yards round. The Cossacks stayed in the tower and shot with their guns, and the Yakuts sent their arrows to the Cossacks. Dygyn was thinking. The Cossacks had no food, and they came out of their tower to get

some. Now they had a very bad time. Dygyn was a very brave warrior. He killed a great many Cossacks, but nobody could kill him.' Then Ivan Koltzo played a trick. The Cossacks hung out a heavy block from the tower, and under it they placed all kinds of dolls and ribbons. Then Koltzo sent a message to the Yakuts: "Let us have peace. Come to us as friends." The foolish Yakuts believed him and went into the tower. Dygyn went also. While they were looking at the dolls and ribbons Koltzo ordered the Cossacks to cut the cords holding up the block. It fell down and crushed them all, and they all died. Koltzo tore out Dygyn's eye, put it in [207] spirit, and sent it to the Tsar. That was an eye indeed; thirty pounds it weighed! But the Tsar said: "Why did you not bring me this giant alive?"

'And from that time the whole of the region was ours. The Yakuts ran away to the forest, to the marshes, to the mountains, and the Government could hardly find them afterwards.' "

7: Shklovsky -- 224 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 173, 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

"There is a vague tradition that many years ago the Yakuts lived in the south by the sea near the Mongols, (1) but that in the time of the great warriors they went farther north

1. Probably by Mongols is meant Bouriats.

to the Lena. They were pursued by the Mongols, who tried to kill them all, but happily the moon waned, and, as the Mongols never make war between full moon and new moon, the Yakuts took advantage of this interval to travel as fast as possible to where they now live. The Yakuts in this part of the country are healthier, more energetic, and less oppressed than their brothers in the Far North-East, for the criminal settlers have not so much liberty. The Oulooss tries at first to get rid of the criminal by giving him butter, a sack of barley meal, and 10s. if he will go away and never return, and those who do return meet with a very unpleasant reception. Frequently there are terrible murders, the Yakuts throwing the criminals into ice-holes, which they can do without fear, for the criminals, being outlaws, have no rights."

24: Wrangell--36-37 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut
116, 173, 224

"Their countenance and language fully confirm the tradition their Tartar descent. (1)

1. According to this tradition, their ancestor was a Tartar named Sachalar, who came from his own country on the other side of the mountains to Kirenga on the Lena, where he settled and married a Tungusian woman; the Jakuti still call themselves Sachalary.

They are properly a pasto-[37]ral people, whose chief riches consist in the number of their horses and horned cattle, on the produce of which they subsist almost entirely. But the abundance of fur-animals in their vast forests, and the profit which they can make by selling their skins to the Russians, have turned much of their attention to the chase, of which they are often passionately fond, and which they follow with unwearied ardour and admirable skill."

24: Wrangell--165-166 G-3 (1820-23) 1842 Yakut -1-2
116, 165, 173, 178, 212, 577

"I made several excursions on foot to different albuty, twenty or thirty wersts off. In one of them, called Sul'gi Etar (horse pasture), I met with a Jakut eighty-two years of age, named after Lieutenant Laptew, who visited the Kolyma in 1739. He had married a Russian woman, and could not only speak Russian fluently, but also read and wrote it with ease. In spite of his great age, he was so healthy and vigorous that he used to ride long distances with the young men, drive the cattle to and from their pasture, and take his share in most of the country occupations. He was very fond of tea and of punch, which are very expensive luxuries in this place. I passed many agreeable hours with this unusually intelligent Jakut. He complained of the ignorance of his countrymen, who, he said, had been formerly more civilized; and that, before they separated from the other Tartar races to which they are allied, they had possessed written characters, and, consequently, means of intellectual cultivation [166] which they have since lost. He asserted that his tribe had once inhabited far distant southern regions, and in proof of it he quoted several popular sayings, in which gold and gems, lions and tigers, are mentioned, of which they are now entirely ignorant. He was unable to speak more definitely concerning their earlier condition and country, as such accounts have only been handed down by traditions, which have been in great measure lost since Schamanism has yielded to Christianity. He said that litigiousness, dishonesty, and deceit had increased, and complained particularly that the immoderate use of spirituous liquors (of which, by-the-way, he was rather fond himself) had caused such a physical

deterioration in the race, that no one now attained to the age of a hundred years and upward, as was often the case in his father's time. He talked much of the severity of the climate, the frequent failure of the hay-harvest, and the ravages of wolves. I will here recount all that I could collect from his narrations and from conversation with his countrymen concerning their earliest history."

38: Dobell--15-16 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 173

"According to their chronicles, as handed down by oral tradition, they are descended from two tribes. One of these was named Batulen, whose chief was called Omogoy Bey, and who with his family quitted his country for reasons unknown, but was probably driven away by force of arms and the oppressions and vexations of some more powerful horde. The number of his tribe that emigrated to the country of the Burettas, in the vicinity of Irkutsk, on the banks of the Lena, is also unknown. On descending that river they stopped for some [16] time at the mouth of the river Olekma, and then continued their journey until they arrived at the spot where the town of Yakutsk now stands, and there made a permanent settlement. They relate, that whilst in the country of the Burettas, and proceeding towards the Lena, they were several times attacked by that horde, who at length collecting all their forces, determined to exterminate Omogoy Bey and his party. A superstition prevailing even to this hour amongst the Burettas, that of never undertaking any thing of importance between the full and new moon, saved the Yakuts from destruction. Whilst their enemies were awaiting the propitious moment to attack them, they crossed the mountains to the banks of the Lena, where, constructing rafts, they embarked with their cattle and horses, and were soon conveyed by that rapid stream far from the danger that had threatened them. The place where they descended the steep bank of the river to embark still bears the name of the Yakutskoy Svoz, or place of embarkation of the Yakuts."

38: Dobell--16-17 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 173

"Their second tribe, they say, is descended from a tribe whose chief is named Ellija, pro-[17]bably the same Tartar horde from whence sprung the ancestors of the Batulen race, who also descended the Lena, but from what direction is likewise unknown. It appears that Ellija had been informed of the departure of Omogoy Bey; and, although the navigation of the Lena was quite unknown to him, neither its dangers nor the extreme severity of the climate could deter him from executing his design. He arrived at Yakutsk, and finding there Omogoy Bey and his party, immediately joined them. Omogoy Bey became much attached to Ellija, and gave him his daughter in marriage, which indissolubly united the two tribes."

40: Burr--151-152 N-2 (no date) 1931 Yakut
116, 173, 197

"They preserve vague traditions of a social organization under a ruler called the Tuiguin or Tygyn, the greatest of whom was one Omoghou, called Bai, the Wealthy. His descendants people the east side of the Lena; [152] his daughter married a man named Ellé, and their descendants are on the west side. The language is clearly a member of the Turanian group, and the connection with Tartar and Turkish can be easily noted. It is not harmonious, the dominant sound being the guttural vowel."

55:Popov E-5 (no date) 1964 RV2 Yakut RV2
• Dolgan

somewhat to the north of this boundary. The migration from winter to summer camps and back was made in the spring or fall. 221

In winter, the families of Noril'sk and Popigay Dolgans lived apart from one another, often singly. The remainder still continued to nomadize along the northern edge of the forest and formed the chain of "stations" of the winter Noril'sk-Popigay highway; this consisted of groups of 5-10 households, some of the stations comprising groups of permanent dwellings. But since reindeer require frequent change of pasture, the camps of separate families and the entire stations, and the reindeer-herders living in the Russian-type houses as well, had to change their place of residence several times during the course of the winter. 361 221

As spring approached and the camps broke up, the Dolgans formed into nomadic groups. These groups were combined on a territorial basis and were bound by common economic interests. Associations of this kind meant that a smaller number of herdsmen was required for the reindeer since it took fewer people to look after a large herd than several small ones. In the spring, as soon as the grass appeared, and in the summer, during the season of the mosquitoes and other harmful insects, the Dolgans watched their herds the whole day through, appointing sentries from each household in turn. The nomadic Dolgans wandered along lakes, rivers and mountains. In the autumn, when the insects disappeared, each group of nomads divided up once more into separate families, which then nomadized in the region of their polar-fox traps, setting them again for the winter, or else hunted singly for wild reindeer until it was time to go back to the camps. [233]

The reindeer-breeding of the Dolgans combined the traditions of the Tungus breeding for purposes of riding, with devices and techniques borrowed from the herders of the Samoyedic groups. Thus, the Dolgans used reindeer both for riding and carrying (in summer) and at the same time made extensive use of reindeer sled-teams (in winter). But even in the first half of the 19th century the Dolgans in some parts only used their reindeer for riding. The various types of sleds are fundamentally similar to the Nennish and Nganasan types, but they also have the Yakut type with its low, straight staves. The harnessing technique differed from that of the Nentsy; the lead reindeer is harnessed and controlled by the rein on the right, whereas among the Nentsy, Entsy and Nganasans the lead reindeer is harnessed and controlled by the left-hand rein (it should be noted in this connection that the Evenks and Dolgans, even when riding reindeer, mount from the right and also guide it from the right). The system of milking reindeer, typical of the Evenks, was retained by the Dolgans; like the Nentsy and Nganasans they also used herd dogs. The saddles and riding techniques of the Dolgans were of the Tungus type. 233 177 492 [171]

The Dolgans hunted polar fox, wild reindeer and various wildfowl including duck, geese and partridge. Until quite recently they still used bows and arrows for the purpose, obtaining them from the Kets, via the Russians, and also from the Yakuts and southern Evenks. The Dolgans also had self-triggered bows for killing reindeer, which they set up in the forest preserves east of the Khatanga. According to legend, in the remote past the Dolgans used to hunt reindeer with slings and throwing-arrows. 224 [173]

The Dolgans attributed great importance to collective reindeer spearing in the autumn at river crossings, and to various hunting techniques with guns (which replaced the old bow and arrow). In the winter, the animals were hunted by means of specially trained decoy reindeer. In the winter they hunted reindeer with guns and bows and arrows almost entirely by the chasing technique: 4 strong reindeer were harnessed to a light sled and the herd was trailed for hours on end. Another form of winter hunting